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ABSTRACT

As one in a series of eight articles written by different professionals concerned with Alaska Native land claims, this article focuses on passage of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act and emphasizes the influence of political and economic interests on the legislative process. Designed to stimulate careful political/historical reading and discussion at an advanced secondary or adult level, this booklet identifies and defines such key words as: compromise, conservative, chamber, self-determination, and lobbying. Among the major events discussed in the text are: (1) the early work on behalf of American Indians by Senators Henry Jackson and Edward Kennedy; (2) the "land freeze" of 1966 which effectively bound up 90 percent of Alaska's land and prevented development of the Trans-Alaskan Pipeline; (3) strengthening of the Alaska Native position via regional and national organization; (4) development of the Native bill which demanded 60 million acres with full title, more than one billion dollars in money settlement, and a Native management system; (5) Native lobbying efforts to gain support from Indian organizations, oil and other business interests, civil rights groups, the press, and the White House; (6) differences between the final House and Senate bills; (7) change in concern from "passage at any price" to "who gets what"; (8) the ultimate compromise. (JC)

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# the politics of passage

One of a series of Articles on

THE NATIVE LAND CLAIMS

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# THE POLITICS OF PASSAGE

By

Guy Martin
Alaska Legislative Aide
to the Late Congressman, Nick Begich

One of a Series of Articles on

THE NATIVE LAND CLAIMS

COMPILED & PRODUCED
JOINTLY BY

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JUNE 1975

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## TO THE READER

This booklet is one of a collection of articles written by people who are interested in Native land claims. As you will see, all of the people do not agree. They present their ideas for you to read and discuss. You may be excited about some of their ideas because you think they are absolutely right, or very wrong. When you have finished reading the articles, you will probably have done a lot of thinking about Native land claims and Alaskan politics.

Politics is not an easy field to understand. And yet politics is what the Native land claims are all about. Most of the articles were written by people who have spent a lot of time working in the world of politics. These people have a whole vocabulary which most students have not yet learned. So, to help students understand the reading, there is at the beginning of each article a list of definitions of terms. Any words in *italics* are explained for you at the beginning of that article, or an earlier one.

At the end of some articles are questions which you can ask yourself. In the margin, next to the question are numbers. If you go back to paragraphs in the article with the same numbers, and reread, you can increase your understanding. We cannot say you will always have definite answers but you may form your point of view.

## ARTICLES AND AUTHORS

| | |
|---|---|
| Stock, Corporations, and the Native Land Claims Settlement | Stephen Conn<br>Associate Professor of Law<br>ISEGR, University of Alaska |
| Environmental Issues in the Land Claims | Guy Martin<br>Alaska Legislative Aide<br>to the Late Congressman,<br>Nick Begich |
| New Tribes for New Times | Guy Martin<br>Alaska Legislative Aide<br>to the Late Congressman,<br>Nick Begich |
| The Politics of Passage | Guy Martin<br>Alaska Legislative Aide<br>to the Late Congressman,<br>Nick Begich |
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| Village Alaska | Harold Napoleon<br>Director, Yupiktak Bista |
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| Planning How to Use Land in Village Alaska | Bob Weeden<br>Professor of Wildlife Management<br>University of Alaska |

## THE POLITICS OF PASSAGE

The Alaska Native Land Claims Settlement is felt by many to be the most important Indian legislation ever to be enacted in the United States. If this is true, and it may very well be, it is because the Alaska Natives actually "won" their cause in an arena where the Indians rarely win one, and where very few people gave them any chance at all. How that happened is the subject of this chapter, although several books are required to really tell the story.

There are many versions of how it all happened. Any major act of Congress involves so many forces that each person sees only a part, and feels his part to be especially important. Still, there were certain factors that made it all happen in the 92nd Congress which everyone could understand.

When the 92nd Congress began meeting in January of 1971, there was nothing really new about the Alaska Native Land Claims. They had been before Congress for years, and during the 91st Congress, a settlement bill had even been passed in the Senate, but no action had been taken by the House. Still, there were important reasons why the 92nd Congress would be different. A short look backward is the best way to understand those differences.

During the 91st Congress, the U.S. Senate led the way on the Settlement Act. There were two major reasons for this Senate leadership. First, leadership did not come from any of the other possible sources, such as the Administration, the State of Alaska, the House of Representatives or the Alaska Natives themselves. Second, the Senate had a good background of facts to work with, due to the efforts of a few Senators who were interested in the cause of Alaskan Natives and in the cause of Indian justice nationwide.

These Senators included men like Edward Kennedy, who had a long background of interest in Indian affairs. Along with his Special Subcommittee on Indian Education, he had made valuable studies on the economic, health and educational conditions of American Indians. This work greatly influenced the way in which both the Johnson and Nixon Administrations thought of Indians affairs. Even more important was Senator Henry Jackson, the Chairman of the Senate Interior Committee, which prepared the bill that passed the Senate. In 1968, Senator Jackson took the unusual step of asking the Federal Field Committee for Development Planning in Alaska to help

gather the facts necessary to write a settlement. That report, *Alaska Natives and the Land*, was sent to Jackson as the 91st Congress got underway in 1969 and became the framework for the Senate bill. It remains one of the best statements on the relationship of the Alaska Natives to their land.

At the same time that a reasonably well-informed Senate moved toward action, the House of Representatives argued over a number of widely differing bills. The State of Alaska, under Governor Keith Miller, definitely stated that the land claims were a Federal matter and generally refused to participate in the settlement, either financially or by supplying guidance and support. The Nixon Administration showed a similar lack of interest in a settlement. A possible explanation for the lack of interest by both the State and the Administration was that neither yet realized the importance of a claims settlement for the Trans-Alaska Pipeline. As a final factor in the lack of leadership during the 91st Congress, the Alaska Natives were neither well organized nor united enough to play the effective role they would play only one year later.

During the elections of the fall of 1970, many of the forces surrounding the Native land claims issue began to change, and it became clear that the 92nd Congress would face new issues and new people as it considered the claims. William A. Egan was again elected Governor of Alaska after being out of office for four years during the Walter Hickel/Keith Miller term. Governor Egan and Nick Begich, who won the only Alaska seat in the U.S. House, both campaigned on the firm promise to see the land claims settled. Each promised both willingness to listen and state participation in the settlement, things which were lacking in the years before.

Changes were also happening in the organizations of Alaska Natives. Regional groups were becoming better organized, and the Alaska Federation of Natives gained strength as the spokesman for all Alaskan Natives in the land claims struggle. The election of Don Wright as the AFN President changed the organization, brought new people in as leaders, and probably made the AFN both more militant and more capable of dealing in the practical world of politics. Perhaps most important was that the experience of the unsuccessful years served as a lesson for future planning. The Native group that finally began planning for the attack on the 92nd Congress was experienced. It was also a better organized, better advised, and more united group than ever before.

Still, this would not have been enough to explain all that was completed during the year. The force of other events also shaped the final result: The 92nd Congress was one which came just before a Presidential election year, thus making it a time when people up for re-election try to show that they will keep old promises. In the case of President Nixon, he had made a strong speech in July of 1970, promising the end of national injustive to Indians and stating that he believed in "Indian self-determination." The Indian rights movement was also gaining strength and public acceptance. In the Spring of 1971, at the Convention of the Naticnal Congress of American Indians, Vice President Agnew stated again the President's earlier promises and especially mentioned the Alaska Native claims.

Also influencing the Nixon Administration, as well as the State of Alaska, was the fast growing recognition that until the Alaska Native Claims were settled, the permit for the Trans-Alaska Pipeline could not be issued, and the "land freeze" which bound nearly 90% of Alaska's vast lands would not be lifted. The "freeze" began in 1966 by order of Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall to protect both Alaska land and the rights of the Alaskan Natives. It stopped Alaska from gaining title to lands selected under the Statehood Act, prevented many Alaskans from gaining private land they wanted, and stood in the way of the pipeline. Most non-Native Alaskans had learned to hate the freeze and, in an effort to see it ended, supported an immediate settlement to the claims. To many people, the important issue was that the settlement be quick rather than that it meet the needs of Natives or be fair.

Both the State of Alaska and the oil industry were beginning to feel the economic problems of holding back development of North Slope oil. An increasing number of people began to realize that the settlement of the Alaska Native Land Claims was an important step in the development of Alaska. As the 92nd Congress opened in January, 1971, a great variety of people and groups, for a wide variety of good and bad reasons, had made the settlement of the land claims their first goal.

The Natives pushed the matter from the beginning. An extremely able legal and consulting team headed by Ramsey Clark, put together a proposed bill which set out the united Native position on settlement terms. The Natives realized the changing and favorable situation in Congress. Sixty million acres

became the basic land demand, even though a vote on forty million had received only thirteen votes in the Senate the previous year. Similar changes were made in other parts of the Native demands, and this bill became the basic reference point for the Native position during the months that followed. All members of the Alaska delegation became sponsors of the bill, and the Natives also secured the sponsorship of most of the Indian rights supporters in both the House and Senate, including nearly every member who had been mentioned as a possible Presidential candidate.

During this same early period, important Native leaders and advisors began a campaign to persuade the White House to submit a bill favorable to the Native position. It was already clear that the basic bill of the Senate Interior Committee would be the ten million acre bill of the last Congress, and that Chairman Wayne Aspinall of the House Interior Committee would introduce his own legislation which would not even be as generous as the Senate bill. Somehow, it seemed very necessary to gain firm support from the Nixon Administration to tip the balance toward the Native position. Most Native leaders and advisors felt that such support would not come from the Department of Interior, and its Bureau of Indian Affairs, so Interior was largely bypassed in favor of direct contact with the White House. Later, when White House support of the Native claims was felt by the Interior Department, their Committee gave much more support.

At the same time that this was happening, the Natives were also organizing a united lobbying effort which showed the benefits of the experience gained in previous years. One of the keys to success is to gain early promises of support, and the Natives were getting them rapidly from national Indian organizations, oil and other business interests, civil rights groups, and the all-important press. Later in the process, the influence and friendship of these many different supporters would be very necessary to the passage of the legislation.

Finally, three bills would be introduced in the Senate and three in the House. Shortly after the 91st Congress opened, the first two were introduced in each chamber. The Natives' bill was one of them, calling for sixty million acres of land with full title, more than one billion dollars in a money settlement, and a system for managing the settlement mainly by Native regional corporations. In the Senate, Senator Jackson introduced about the same bill which had passed the year before, calling for ten million acres of land in full title

plus Native subsistence living protection, money totalling up to one billion dollars, and an organization plan of statewide corporations, rather than regional groups.

In the House, where the Native bill was also introduced with a number of important sponsors, the second bill was one prepared by House Interior Committee Chairman Wayne Aspinall. This bill provided for as little as one million acres of land in full title with other land given subsistence protection. The organizational structure centered around village corporations, and the money provisions included up to one billion dollars, but with a pay-off schedule which made this figure somewhat less valuable.

After the introduction of these bills, the situation was basically the same in both the House and Senate. In each chamber the Native bill was at one extreme, and at the other extreme was a much more conservative bill prepared by the chairman of the Interior Committee in each chamber. Under ordinary circumstances, the result of this situation would have been that the bills of the powerful committee chairman would win, but this was no ordinary year, and no ordinary cause. The committee chairman would have to give in.

The first new factor was the Administration bill, which was introduced in both the House and Senate in early April of 1971. The Native effort at the White House showed clearly, as the bill provided for forty million acres of land with full title, up to one billion dollars in cash, and an organizational pattern which was centralized. It was a bill which definitely favored the Native position. Although the short summaries of the bills included here cannot possibly explain the many details of each bill, it was clear that the Administration bill was a breaking point; the work at the White House had paid off.

How the Administration bill was won is a story in itself. The Natives had a good cause. It was an election year. The Indian rights movement was gaining strength and acceptance. Still, none of these factors could have been a controlling influence at the White House, or even made it possible for Native leaders to see the White House staff without other assistance. This assistance came largely from the oil industry and related business interests, and from the only Republican in Alaska's delegation, Senator Ted Stevens. This was the first of many times that the shared fates of the land claims and the

Trans-Alaska pipeline would produce a strange coalition of support for the Native cause.

Perhaps the most important result of the Administration bill was that it made believable the pro-Native position and encouraged many members of Congress to stop thinking of the settlement as merely a "give-away" to silence the nagging claims at the lowest possible price. The Administration bill was also a message to the Republicans in both the House and Senate of the position they might comfortably take on the issue. This White House guidance certainly helped to produce excellent Republican leadership on the bill, especially on the House Interior Committee where it was essential to influence the most conservative bill of Chairman Aspinall.

To this point, the progress of the land claims had been about the same in the House and the Senate, and it continued this way for one more step, as hearings were held in each Interior Committee. The factors coming out of these hearings were hopeful. First, the State of Alaska, under Governor Egan, showed that it was prepared to fulfill its promise of participation. With few exceptions, the State agreed to go along with all reasonable terms of settlement and to contribute up to one-half billion dollars to be taken from the mineral revenues of the State after the North Slope began to produce oil. It became clear that major concerns of the State were to see the settlement accomplished quickly, to insure that it would allow land selection under the Statehood Act to begin again, and to allow North Slope development to start.

Also during the hearings, the Alaska delegation continued to show a belief in a cooperative approach, putting aside personal glory in favor of working to improve and speed up action on the claims. Also, the hearings produced the first signs of a growing environmental interest in the legislation, an interest which would become one of the major controversies later. From both the State and Native viewpoints, the hearings were a success, although some Native disunity came to the surface in the testimony of North Slope Natives who asked for a greater portion of the settlement split based on the large and valuable area of land they were giving up in any settlement. This was only a sign of the difficulty faced by the Alaska Federation of Natives in holding the regional groups together.

With the hearings over, and the Administration bill introduced, all necessary first steps to action had been taken. It had been long understood that any

action would have to begin in the House, as it had failed to act the previous year when the Senate passed its bill. This also provided a built in strategy for the Natives. Whatever legislation the more conservative House finally passed could then be appealed to the Senate where the natural competition between the two chambers could be exploited, resulting in a more favorable bill from the Senate. Later, the differences could be resolved in a conference committee of the House and Senate.

House Interior Committee Chairman Wayne Aspinall made it clear very early that he would use the chairman's traditional powers of controlling the rules and working slowly to see that his own bill was the one which would be the basis of the settlement. In any other year, his power on such matters would have been impossible to fight, but this was a different year. Along with Alaska Congressman Nick Begich, who was always after the Chairman and the committee to act on this legislation, the Natives had many friends on the committee. Even those who were not usually in favor of Indian causes were subject to at least one of the many interests involved in his particular cause, whether it was the Administration, the oil industry, the State of Alaska or some other. The result was that the power of the conservative forces on the committee was still great, but not as great as usual on this issue. The message from all interests was to act quickly.

It was the continued threat of Committee Chairman Aspinall and Indian Affairs Subcommittee Chairman James Haley *not* to act quickly, and perhaps not to act at all, that was the most obvious in the struggle in the House. For the Natives and the State, who would be the ones who would have to live most closely with the settlement, this was particularly difficult. It was a delicate balance, held by all in favor of the bill but particularly by the Natives and the State of Alaska, to make the legislation as good as possible, but to carefully avoid such strong disagreement with the committee leadership that delay would occur.

When people disagreed, and delay threatened, the great number of interests involved would work with those whom they knew best. The Administration would ask that Republicans cooperate on the committee, oil industry representatives would get in touch with members who were usually friendly to their interests, and so on. All the factors listed earlier which made the 92nd Congress so different from the 91st came into play, and the support for the legislation came from many sources for a wide variety of reasons.

There were crises along the way, and it appeared more than once that the Indian Affairs Subcommittee would fail to act at all. But each time compromises were made which kept the bill alive. Often, the central figure in the compromise was Alaska Congressman Nick Begich, who had always refused to take sides and generally stayed in the middle to help compromises. Suprisingly, the bill began to change during this process, and the one million acres of the Aspinall bill grew toward twenty. Although it was clear that any final House bill would look very much like the Aspinall bill, many important changes were won.

Finally, there came a point when it became clear that most of the *possible* changes had been made and the shortness of time demanded that final subcommittee action be taken as soon as possible. A final try for forty million acres was made, and a final compromise agreed upon which actually provided for this much land on a "deferred selection" basis. This was not really acceptable to the Natives, but very important in order to argue that the House of Representatives had "accepted" the idea of forty million acres.

The committee work of the House is bacically a closed affair. Most of the events just described occurred in near secrecy, so that when the Indian Affairs Subcommittee finally acted to report out a land claims bill, it was a surprise even to many of those who were interested in the bill. It was also a clear signal that an Alaska Native Land Claims bill would pass in the 92nd Congress. The Senate picked up the signal immediately, and action began there.

Between the action of the Indian Affairs Subcommittee and consideration by the full Interior Committee, which is the next step in the process, forces began to unify around the compromise bill. From this point on, Chairman Aspinall would be the defender of the bill and the leader of its advocates. Although the Natives, the State of Alaska, several Native organizations, and others disagreed with parts of the compromise bill, there was an informal unity to unsure its passage in the House. It is interesting to note that Chairman Aspinall, in return for his continued support, tried to make the agreement both formal and binding on the Natives, even with respect to their future actions in the Senate, but this was wisely sidestepped by the Native leadership.

This basic unity carried the bill through approval by the full committee and on to the floor of the House. This unity became important in the full

committee when numerous environmental amendments were offered which would have affected the land selection process in the bill, and possibly the pipeline. Although some of these amendments, especially those regarding land-use planning in Alaska, could have been good additions to the bill, the coalition was by this time so solid that all major changes were rejected. These environmental amendments would later become the big controversy in the bill on the floor of the House.

In the Senate, the action of the House Indian Affairs Subcommittee was seen as a sure sign that the House would actually pass a bill during the 92nd Congress. That the House had acted at all was seen by most as a victory, that the House bill was quite acceptable to most interests was regarded as a happy surprise. Since there was little doubt that the Senate would act, the goal of everyone, especially the Natives, was that the Senate pass a bill which corrected all the weaknesses and omissions of the House bill. The Natives especially tried to make the Senate bill far more generous than that of the House. Later, when the two bills were compromised in a conference committee, the goal would be to keep the best features of each one in the final settlement.

Because the Senate Interior Committee was more open and more willing to listen than that of the House, and because the entire Senate has simpler rules due to its smaller size, the chances to accomplish these goals were good. The focus was on Senator Jackson's ten million acre bill of the previous year, which after the House action, became the most conservative bill around. With the pressure of a more generous House bill, a far more generous Administration bill, a strong Native lobbying effort, the Alaska pipeline and its importance to his State of Washington, and his announcement as a Presidential candidate all weighing on Senator Jackson, there seemed little doubt that his bill would be open to real change.

In addition to all the pressure factors listed, there was also the fact that Henry Jackson is an able Senator, with a good and open Interior Committee staff. Unlike the House, where progress on the bill was marked by a series of delays and minor arguments, the Senate Interior Committee took up the issues in workmanlike fashion, with much of the work open to the representatives of the Natives, the State of Alaska, and all the other concerned interests. Although there were disagreements, they were resolved in a way which did not threaten the legislation itself. For instance, the land

planning and environmental issues which had caused such arguments in the House Interior Committee were handled by including an clause prepared by Alaska Senator Mike Gravel establishing a joint state-federal land-use planning commission.

Through such a process, the Senate Interior Committee brought its settlement legislation to a point of readiness, waiting only on final House action. The goal was to insure that the Senate bill was more liberal than whatever the House finally passed, but how much more liberal was still at issue.

It was at this point, only days before the House Interior Committee acted, that the realization hit many people and groups in Alaska that a bill would be passed. A wave of immediacy was felt, and many in Alaska suddenly cared what was in the bill. A wide range of interests, including Chambers of Commerce, mining interests, Native regional and village corporations, and others changed their concern from "passage at any price" to "who is getting what?" Some Alaskans criticised the Alaska delegation in Congress, the Egan Administration, and the AFN leadership. When they discovered that, while some had been doing nothing, others had been working hard to prepare bills which were more far-reaching than anyone had ever expected. Even the AFN leadership was criticised by some of its regions and villages which were discovering that such broad legislation can never fully answer all the specific problems of each area.

Although the controversy grew hot in the final days, the work of many months was impossible to undo, and the fact was that the process leading to the bills in each chamber was both long and relatively open. The unity reached in the House by earlier compromises was most important now, as Chairman Aspinall stood by the bill he had finally agreed to, even though it was many times more generous than he had originally planned. The Interior Committee of the House reported out its bill, and was followed days later by the Senate Interior Committee.

The next step was action by the full House and Senate. Again the Senate would play the waiting game, acting only after the House had passed its bill. One final factor was to come into the House passage, however, and it was enough to finally prove the strength and wisdom of the early compromises which unified the support for the bill. The factor was the growing number of people in favor of an environmental amendment to the bill which would set

down a wide range of land planning requirements in the House bill and greatly affect the land selection rights of the State of Alaska under the Statehood Act. Although this entire issue is the subject of another chapter, the point is that it became one of the most hard-fought environmental issues of the year in a year when environmental issues (like the SST defeat) were doing well.

When the House bill came to the floor of the House for debate, the issue was not the land claims bill itself, but the land-use planning amendment sponsored by Congressman Udall of Arizona. To defeat that amendment, and insure the passage of the final bill, one of the strangest coalitions in recent memory got together, including the Alaska Natives, the Nixon Administration, organized labor, the oil industry, civil rights and Indian organizations, and the House leadership. The difficult choice was between Native rights and environment, or so it was portrayed, and the Udall amendment was narrowly defeated after one of the most exciting debates of the year. After that the bill was passed 334 to 63.

In contrast to the wild atmosphere and unpredictable outcome of the House proceedings, the Senate took up its bill in quiet and orderly fashion only ten days later, passing it without serious debate or amendments, and on a voice vote rather than a roll call. The only consideration for the senate was that it act quickly to keep the legislation moving and to avoid the heat of the growing controversy in Alaska.

Looking quickly at the bills passed by the House and Senate, there was little question that the Senate bill was the one most favorable to the Native position. It contained the right to immediately select forty million acres of land, limited only by its location near existing Native villages. The House bill gave the right to only about eighteen million acres on an immediate basis, with twenty-two million more to come after the State of Alaska had selected its land under the Statehood Act.

Both bills were similar in the cash settlement provided, with the House bill providing up to $925 million and the Senate up to $1 billion. The greatest difference between the two was in the distribution of the money and the administrative requirements for Native organizations. The Senate bill relied mainly on statewide Native corporations having broad powers, while the House bill generally favored the village as the basic level of organization, even

going so far as to require a certain amount of cash to be distributed directly to the village level. Also, the two bills contrasted sharply in level of detail, with the House bill being extremely short and straightforward, while the Senate bill was extremely detailed in trying to cover all possible situations that might arise in the settlement.

Again, it is necessary to say that the bills were far more complex than this short summary can explain, and the task of compromising them would be difficult. To do so, a conference committee to resolve the differences was appointed with members from the House and Senate. The entire Alaska delegation was included, and in the case of Congressman Begich, this was an important victory because first term Congressmen are rarely appointed by the House.

Although there is not space here to fully set out the entire interesting story of the conference committee meetings, some things are worth nothing. The first is that it was at this point that the Native strategy to keep the most favorable features of each bill was to have taken effect. Although some changes were won, such as the ability to select forty million acres of land immediately many other issues were not decided so favorable. These issues included the organization plan, on which the House bill favoring the village level prevailed. Also, many of the detailed Senate clauses directed to possible future problems were cut from the final bill in favor of simpler House provisions.

It certainly cannot be said that the Native strategy failed at this point because of these things, but it was clear that the closed nature of the conference committee, combined with other factors, certainly limited the ability of the Natives to influence the committee as much as desired. Two of the other factors are particularly important. The first is that this conference pitted two of the toughest committee chairmen - Wayne Aspinall and Henry Jackson against one another. The fact that Jackson, who was also running a Presidential campaign, was absent from many of the meetings, was decisive, as the Senate conferees were without a strong leader. At the same time, Chairman Aspinall made it clear very early in the proceedings that he and the House had come as far as they were prepared to come on certain issues, and it seems the conferees largely believed him, as it was clear that the House bill largely won in the final settlement.

The second factor was that the State of Alaska, and Governor Egan, seemed to have special influence during the conference deliberations. Although the

Governor did not participate in the meetings, he was active in a consulting role. The conferees, especially Wayne Aspinall and the Alaska delegation, seemed to feel that it was the entire State of Alaska, rather than the Natives alone, that would feel the greatest impact of the settlement. The official position of the State became influential. At one point, when it became clear that the State would not adopt the entire "Native position" on the final bill, AFN President Don Wright broadly threatened a "new Indian war" in Alaska. Still, the State and the conference committee held firm, and the final bill was a compromise most guided by the House bill. The "one day war" was forgotten, the statement was explained away, and the realization grew that the final bill was a great victory for the Alaska Natives, and an historic day for the State of Alaska.

The fact is that the Natives succeeded in winning their cause against heavy odds, and with the assistance of an unlikely set of supporters. Along the way, they had to overcome their own amateurish lobbying efforts, an angry reaction from some Alaskans, arguments among themselves, poor communications, and a conservative Congress which had a questionable record in responding to Indian rights. What it all means remains to be answered, but it is certain that the passage of this bill represents a milestone in American Indian affairs, and an event which for Alaska rivals Statehood in economic, social and political importance.

**Guy Martin**
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**to the Late Congressman, Nick Begich**

## TERMS

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| 92ND CONGRESS | the 1971 session of the government in Washington, D. C. There are two parts of Congress: an upper division, the Senate, and a lower division, the House of Representatives. |
| BILL | a suggested law. A bill is introduced in the House by a representative, then discussed and finally voted on. The same thing happens in the Senate. |
| ADMINISTRATION | the President and his advisors. |
| SENATE INTERIOR COMMITTEE | a group of senators who are in charge of studying matters related to American resources. The Committee makes recommendations and writes bills for the Senate. |
| ROLE | the part someone plays with other people. A man may play the role of father at home with his children and the role of tough politician in Washington, D. C. |
| SELF-DETERMINATION | has to do with power. It is making decisions for and generally taking care of yourself. |
| TITLE | the right of ownership. |
| CONSULTING TEAM | a group of experts asked to give advice on some problem. |
| SPONSORS (of a bill) | the people who speak in favor of a bill or a group. |
| HOUSE INTERIOR COMMITTEE | a group of representatives who are in charge of studying matters related to American Indians and Eskimos, and natural resources. The Committee makes recommendations and writes bills for the House of Representatives. |
| LEGISLATION | a law or laws. |
| LOBBYING | talking to legislators to persuade them to vote a certain way. |

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|---|---|
| CHAMBER | either the Senate or the House of Representatives. |
| REGIONAL CORPORATION | an organization that is treated like a person under the law. It can own land, buy, sell, spend, and borrow money; sue and be sued. |
| ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE | the way in which something is set up. The Settlement Act tells how villages must organize to get their money. |
| CONSERVATIVE (in politics) | sticking to routine as much as possible, continuing what has been done in the past. |
| COALITION | a group made up of people who want the same thing to happen but for differing reasons. |
| CONTROVERSY | argument. |
| COMPROMISE | an agreement where at first people disagreed but all gave in a little. |
| DEFERRED SELECTION | choosing of areas of land at some time in the future. |
| ENVIRONMENTAL AMENDMENTS | additions to a bill dealing with controls on man's use of land. |
| CHAMBER OF COMMERCE | an organization of businessmen in a town or city. It tries to find ways to increase business in the town. |